This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated May 19, 2006. Claims 1 to 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 to 14 are in the application, with Claims 7, 9 and 11 having been canceled herein. Claims 1, 8, 10 and 12 are the independent claims herein. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,701,378 (Gilhuly) in view of U.S. Publication No. 2002/0161837 (Sasaki), and Claims 2 to 4, 6 to 10, 13 and 14 were rejected under § 103(a) over Gilhuly in view of Sasaki further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,587,831 (O'Brien). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The invention of independent Claims 1, 8, 10 and 12 generally concerns communication with user terminal devices and managing status information of users. According to one feature of the invention, the presence or absence of a user at a terminal device is recognized and schedule information of registered users is searched. Based on whether the schedule search and the user's recognized presence or absence at the terminal, a determination is made whether last status information of the user's action is to be extended or not. Specifically, if it is determined that the current schedule of the user is unoccupied and if the user is absent, then the last status of the user's action is extended as the current status of the user's action, and the user's status information is updated accordingly.

Referring specifically to claim language, independent Claim 8 is directed to a server device for communicating with user terminal devices, comprising an obtaining

unit that obtains a presence or absence of a user from one of the user terminal devices, a search unit that searches schedule information of registered users, a determination unit that determines whether last status information of the user's action is to be extended or not, in accordance with both the presence or absence of the user and the searched schedule information, a generation unit that extends the last status information of the user's action as current status information of the user's action in a case where the determination unit determines that the searched current schedule information is unoccupied and the user is absent, and an update unit that updates the status information of the user's action on the basis of the information generated by the generation unit.

Independent Claims 1, 10 and 12 are directed to a system, a method and a storage medium, respectively, substantially corresponding to the device of Claim 8.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of the invention of independent Claims 1, 8, 10 and 12, and in particular is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the features of determining whether last status information of a user's action is to be extended or not in accordance with both a recognized presence or absence of the user and searched schedule information of registered users, and extending the last status information of the user's action as current status information of the user's action in a case where it is determined that the searched current schedule information is unoccupied and the user is absent.

Gilhuly merely discloses a method for redirecting user-selected data items from a host system to a mobile data communication device upon sensing a triggering event. The redirector program operates in connection with event-generating applications and repackaging systems at the host system to configure and detect a particular user-defined

event, and then to repackage the user-selected items in an electronic wrapper prior to pushing the data items to the mobile device.

The Office Action is contradictory on the alleged disclosure of Gilhuly. Specifically, at page 3, lines 2 to 5, the Office Action alleges that Gilhuly teaches the claimed determination unit. Then, however, at page 3 lines 9 to 11, the Office Action admits that Gilhuly does not disclose the claimed determination unit. Therefore, Applicants take the position that Gilhuly fails to teach the claimed determination unit.

Moreover, the cited portions of Gilhuly, namely column 5, lines 44 to 60, Column 6, lines 6 to 7, and Column 10, lines 35 to 48, merely discloses that a user can redirect certain items when a triggered event occurs, sensing that a user is no longer in the vicinity of the host system, and configuring a screen saver as an event trigger to redirect user selected items. These portions have nothing to do with the claimed determination unit/step, or the claimed generation step. Thus, Gilhuly is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the features of determining whether last status information of a user's action is to be extended or not in accordance with both a recognized presence or absence of the user and searched schedule information of registered users, and extending the last status information of the user's action as current status information of the user's action in a case where it is determined that the searched current schedule information is unoccupied and the user is absent.

Sasaki and O'Brien have been studied but are not seen to remedy the foregoing deficiencies of Gilhuly. Sasaki is merely seen to disclose that a user can set a status so that other users of a chat room can know the status of the user (e.g., present, not at work, etc.) However, Sasaki is not seen to disclose or to suggest anything that, when

combined with Gilhuly would have resulted in at least the features of determining whether last status information of a user's action is to be extended or not in accordance with both a recognized presence or absence of the user and searched schedule information of registered users, and extending the last status information of the user's action as current status information of the user's action in a case where it is determined that the searched current schedule information is unoccupied and the user is absent.

O'Brien is merely seen to disclose a technique of creating a schedule, but is not seen to disclose or to suggest anything that, when combined with Gilhuly and/or Sasaki, would have resulted in at least the features of determining whether last status information of a user's action is to be extended or not in accordance with both a recognized presence or absence of the user and searched schedule information of registered users, and extending the last status information of the user's action as current status information of the user's action in a case where it is determined that the searched current schedule information is unoccupied and the user is absent.

Accordingly, Claims 1, 8, 10 and 12, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be in condition for allowance.

No other matters having been raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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